

Message Text

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 01 MOSCOW 19076 061706Z

41

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAJ-01

ACDA-07 OMB-01 IO-13 /080 W

----- 015662

R 061510Z DEC 76

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1781

INFO AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MOSCOW 19076

E.O. 11652: NA

TAGS: PINT, PGOV, UR

SUBJECT: SOVIET CONSTITUTION DAY BUT NO NEW CONSTITUTION

1. SUMMARY. SOVIET CONSTITUTION DAY DID NOT OCCASION THE UNVEILING OF THE MUCH-DISCUSSED NEW SOVIET CONSTITUTION, NOR WAS THERE EVEN MUCH OFFICIAL COMMENT ABOUT IT. WE HAVE COLLECTED A FEW ADDITIONAL INFORMAL BITS OF INFORMATION WHICH INDICATE THE PROJECT IS STILL A LONG WAY FROM COMPLETION. END SUMMARY.

2. GIVEN BREZHNEV'S CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE CONSTITUTION DRAFTING COMMISSION AND THE PROMINENT MENTION THE NEW CONSTITUTION RECEIVED AT THE 25TH PARTY CONGRESS, SOME LOCAL OBSERVERS HAD THOUGHT THIS YEAR'S CONSTITUTION DAY (DEC 5) MIGHT PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR THE SOVIETS TO EITHER UNVEIL A NEW DOCUMENT OR ISSUE SOME KIND OF PROGRESS REPORT. NEITHER HAPPENED. SUBSTANTIVE CENTRAL PRESS COMMENT ON THE HOLIDAY WAS LIMITED TO A LEAD EDITORIAL SUNDAY IN PRAVDA, WHICH DID NOT EVEN MENTION THE NEW CONSTITUTION, AND IZVESTIYA'S LEAD EDITORIAL, AS WELL AS PART OF A MORE GENERAL IZVESTIYA ARTICLE, SATURDAY EVENING. MOST SPACE WAS DEVOTED TO PAEANS TO SOVIET SOCIETY AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT, BUT THE IZVESTIYA EDITORIAL DID NOT BREZHNEV'S 25TH CONGRESS COMMENTS ABOUT THE CONSTITUTION. IN THE GENERAL ARTICLE, ON SOCIALIST DEMOCRACY, SOVIET CONSTITUTIONAL CHRONOLOGY WAS BRIEFLY REVEIUED, AND THE AUTHOR NOTED THAT A LONG TIME

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

PAGE 02 MOSCOW 19076 061706Z

HAD PASSED SINCE THE APPEARANCE OF THE LAST CONSTITUTION IN 1936.

THE NEW CONSTITUTION WOULD REFLECT
"THE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM, FIX THE BASIC LINES FOR THE
DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIALIST SOCIETY AND ITS POLITICAL ORGANIZATION, AND
STRESS THE HUMANITARIAN CHARACTER OF
THE SOCIALIST STATE, WHOSE HIGHEST GOAL IS THE CONSTRUCTION OF
COMMUNIST SOCIETY."

3. TELEVISION PROGRAMMING RELATED TO THE HOLIDAY WAS
LIMITED TO DOCUMENTARIES AND OTHER BLAND OFFERINGS
IN PRAISE OF THE SOVIET NATION AND PEOPLES.

4. SOME ADDITIONAL BITS OF INFORMATION TEND TO CONFIRM
THE IMPRESSION THAT THE NEW CONSTITUTION WILL TAKE
SOME TIME. FOR EXAMPLE, ONE MEMBER OF THE AUDIENCE
AT A RECENT PUBLIC LECTURE ON THE SOVIET BODY OF LAWS
(SEPAIR) HAD TO ASK THREE TIMES TO GET ANY ANSWER ON
THE NEW CONSTITUTION. WHEN THE SPEAKER DID REPLY, HE
NOTED ONLY THAT DRAFTING THE DOCUMENT WAS "A VERY DIFFICULT
PROCESS AND WOULD TAKE TIME."

5. AND DURING A RECENT CALL AT THE LATVIAN SUPREME
COURT, EMBOFF ASKED DEPUTY CHIEF JUDGE FOR CIVIL MATTERS
ABOUT THE NEW CONSTITUTION. LATTER REPLIED THAT HE
AND HIS STAFF HAD HEARD NOTHING RECENTLY ABOUT THE PROJECT, AND
ASSUMED MUCH MORE TIME WOULD BE NEEDED TO
COMPLETE IT. HE (AND LITHUANIAN LEGAL AUTHORITIES WE
VISITED LAST YEAR) SAID THE REPUBLICS SHOULD GET A CRACK
AT THE DRAFT WHEN INITIAL WORK ON IT IS COMPLETED IN MOSCOW.
IN SHORT, INDICATIONS ARE THAT THE INITIAL DRAFT IS FAR FROM
COMPLETED. MATLOCK

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

NNN

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CONSTITUTIONAL LAW, COMMUNIST GOVERNMENT, POLITICAL SITUATION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 06 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976MOSCOW19076
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760450-0845
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t19761270/aaaacidv.tel
Line Count: 91
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION EUR
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 05 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <05 MAY 2004 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <08 SEP 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET CONSTITUTION DAY BUT NO NEW CONSTITUTION
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, UR
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006